

Sarbanes Snowe Wellstone
Smith (OR) Specter Wyden

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Lott

NOT VOTING—1

Smith of New
Hampshire

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the motion was agreed to.

Mr. KERRY. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—VETO MESSAGE ON S. 1502

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we have cleared this with all concerned parties, including the Democratic leadership.

I ask unanimous consent that the veto message to accompany S. 1502 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and spread in full upon the Journal, and further, that it be set aside to be called up by the majority leader after consultation with the Democratic leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The message of the President is as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S. 1502, the "District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act of 1998."

If we are to prepare our children for the 21st Century by providing them with the best education in the world, we must strengthen our public schools, not abandon them. My agenda for accomplishing this includes raising academic standards; strengthening accountability; providing more public school choice, including public charter schools; and providing additional help to students who need it through tutors, mentors, and after-school programs. My education agenda also calls for reducing class size, modernizing our schools and linking them to the Internet, making our schools safe by removing guns and drugs, and instilling greater discipline.

This bill would create a program of federally funded vouchers that would divert critical Federal resources to private schools instead of investing in fundamental improvements in public schools. The voucher program established by S. 1502 would pay for a few selected students to attend private schools, with little or no public accountability for how those funds are used, and would draw resources and attention away from the essential work of reforming the public schools that serve the overwhelming majority of the District's students. In short, S. 1502 would do nothing to improve public education in the District of Columbia. The bill won't hire one new teacher,

purchase one more computer, or open one after-school program.

Although I appreciate the interest of the Congress in the educational needs of the children in our Nation's Capital, this bill is fundamentally misguided and a disservice to those children.

The way to improve education for all our children is to increase standards, accountability, and choice within the public schools. I urge the Congress to send me legislation I have proposed to reduce class size, modernize our schools, end social promotions, raise academic standards for all students, and hold school systems, schools, and staff accountable for results.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, May 20, 1998.

NATIONAL TOBACCO POLICY AND YOUTH SMOKING REDUCTION ACT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we have had a good bit of discussion today and two very important votes. I hope that we can move on now to some other amendments that really are important and will determine how this legislation is eventually written.

I thank Senators again for keeping calm and working through this. The managers are working very diligently. I emphasize again to my colleagues, while I think every Senator obviously needs to have the time and will have the time he or she needs to make a statement, I do think it would be wise if you can say what you have to say and we can move on. To go for an extended period of time on an amendment 2, 3, 4, 5 hours is going to make it very difficult to ever get a satisfactory result.

I hope Senators will agree to some reasonable time limits. I am not going to ask for a unanimous consent agreement now. I don't think it is necessary, but I will suggest the form that we might take in a consent agreement as to how to proceed.

It is my hope that Senator GREGG from New Hampshire will be recognized next to offer his amendment, with Senator LEAHY, regarding immunity. Senator GREGG and Senator LEAHY have been circling the area since we started. They are ready to go. The debate should last the rest of this session today. It is my hope that the vote on, or in relation to, that amendment can be scheduled to occur first thing on Thursday morning—I mean early—so we can move to the next amendment, which will come from the Democratic side. Senator DASCHLE and Senator KERRY will have to decide what amendment that will be.

Following the disposition of that amendment offered by the Democrats, then I hope the Senate will consider the farmers' protection issue and debate it, have a vote on that issue or issues in a way, hopefully, that is agreeable and as fair as possible to both sides of that issue. Then we will

really have a feel for where we are and can make an assessment about time and where to go from there.

I hope that Senators are comfortable with that. I think that it is a fair way to proceed alternating back and forth. We are not ducking the tough issues. This last amendment was a key amendment. This next amendment is a key amendment. The farmers' amendment is critical to all concerned. So I hope this will be acceptable and we can move in this way. I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, that is, I think, a superb way to proceed. It is the way we have been trying to proceed. I thank the majority leader for trying to structure it that way.

There was an understanding prior to that that the Senator from Nebraska will proceed for 15 minutes, at which point Senators GREGG and LEAHY will be recognized for their amendment.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have no objection to that.

Mr. KERRY. I yield the floor.

Mr. KERREY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, I thank both the Senator from Arizona and the Senator from Massachusetts for allowing me to speak.

I have come to the floor to speak about the tobacco bill. I began several months ago to have conversations with Nebraskans about this legislation. The first question I was asked is, Why do we need it? What has happened here? All of a sudden we have a \$368 billion to a \$516 billion piece of legislation being introduced and people want to know how we got to where we are today.

I would like to describe, at least as I see it, how we got to where we are today in May of 1998, from a point just as recently as 2 years ago when there was no piece of legislation on the floor even remotely approaching something like this. "Why all of a sudden is Congress taking on something like this," is the question I get asked. I will try to give Nebraskans an answer.

The second question I get asked is, "What are we going to do? What is the purpose here?" On behalf of 1,600,000 Nebraskans, I will describe what this law is attempting to do, what is the piece of legislation which Senator MCCAIN and Senator KERRY have brought before this body all about.

The short answer to the question "How did we get to this point?" is that there was a potential lawsuit. There was litigation that was being proposed by States' attorneys general against tobacco companies. There was an attempt through the discovery process to get internal tobacco industry documents, and one of the tobacco companies said, "We'll provide you the information you need to proceed with your case because we are concerned that what we know is going to be discovered